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HITTING THE PLAYOFF GROOVE

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CHILD'S PLAY

Out for 11 games last season with a bad knee, Arrington needed something to take the stress off his leg and keep him entertained, too. Enter the Segway Human Transporter, a \$4,995 self-balancing and motorized, um, transporter. It's supposed to make traveling and errands easier. Mostly, it gives Arrington extra bragging rights with his friends. For the actual kids in the house (4-year-old Keeno and friends), there are two Helmet PC desktop computers and flat-panel displays, at a cost of about \$3,000. The PCs are encased in Redskins helmets, the speakers in helmets of his alma mater, Penn State.

PRO-TECH THIS HOUSE

LAVAR ARRINGTON NEEDED SOME EXPERTISE TO GEAR UP HIS NEW HOME FOR THE 21ST CENTURY. LUCKILY, WE CAME EQUIPPED

BY SHELLEY YOUNGBLUT
AND DEAN HEISTAD

LaVar Arrington has been in the news lately, voicing frustration over the treatment of a right-knee injury last season. So right now, the Redskins linebacker doesn't have his health. But at his new 18,000-square-foot Maryland mansion, he has pretty near everything else. The reason's simple: he's had some unpleasant late-night encounters. "I'm done going out," he says. "My house has to be my night-club." New York-based Studio GAIA handled the interior design and gave him what he wanted, which is lots of play space and comics references. But Arrington wasn't as clear on gadgetry. No PSP freak, he prefers matching wits with real people in his chess room. "I'd rather meet Garry Kasparov than the president," he says. To address his gadget deficit, Arrington let *The Magazine's* tech consultant, Dean Heistad, help choose his electronic gear—everything from home theater to cell phones, all on a Pro Bowler's budget. (The crib has 43 flat-panel TVs, so you can assume it's a big budget.) And don't forget the super security system. If you're gonna have this kind of loot, may as well keep it.



LOCKDOWN

Arrington's two security concerns? Protection from intruders and catching the occasional guest with sticky fingers. An ADT security system (about \$4,000) monitors doors and windows for burglars and takes video of the front gate and grounds. This standard ADT setup is augmented by the stealthy Pelco DX8016 internal video monitoring system (\$14,600), which integrates cameras into the decor. Its video feeds are viewable on any of the linebacker's wireless PC laptops, using pass-codes controlled only by him.



HI-DEF JAM

This is a man who already had a 120-inch home theater TV (plus 10 plasma screens in the foyer displaying aquarium scenes—not to be confused with the dozens of real tropical fish swimming in an entryway pool). And there's a Sonance surround-sound system in the walls and ceiling. We kicked the system up a notch (yes, it's possible) with a Kaleidescape DVD system that costs \$44,400 (yes, it's \$44,400). Arrington can browse 500 DVDs by their cover art, then queue up a flick from any screen in the house. If he's bored in the media room, he can move to the bedroom and pick up the film in the same spot. But wait, there's more: with the Roku PhotoBridge HD digital media player (\$299), stored photos can be displayed in high-res on the theater room's big screen while music files are played on surround sound.



PHONE 411

LaVar's cell phone needs are practical: great reception, long battery life. But when he sees the slim Moto Razr V3 (\$450), he sacrifices life for style. The Razr can take about one solid day of use on a single charge, but just in case, there are extra car chargers in each of Arrington's rides. He also keeps a T-Mobile Sidekick (\$300), with phone functionality. The Sidekick's main task is instant messaging, with a full-color swivel screen and an ergonomic keyboard for easy thumb-typing.

OFFICE SPACE

With his *Skins* paycheck to manage, a 4-year-old's college costs to think of and plans for a big brood with new bride Trishia Johnson, Arrington needs a home office. The anchor? An Alienware Area-51 ALX computer system that sets him back more than \$9,000. Like Arrington, Area-51 is fast (4 ghz) and big (2 gigs of RAM, two 400gb hard drives). He'll view his data on a Sony PremierPro SDM-P234 23" LCD flat-screen monitor (\$1,800) and manipulate it with a Logitech DiNovo wireless keyboard and mouse (\$250). Guarding the sensitive info is a Targus DEFCON Authenticator fingerprint sensor (\$50) that logs him on via his index finger. A Smart-UPS power-conditioning and backup system by APC (\$670) ensures no gear gets fried during Maryland's summer lightning storms. The finishing touch: a dedicated T1 line from Covad (about \$500 per month) with web access up to five times faster than a cable modem. Even if the whole neighborhood is online, LaVar's Internet won't slow down.



SEE MORE OF LAVAR'S DREAM HOME. GO TO ESPN360.com

GEEK YOUR CRIB

THANKS TO A HEFTY REDSKINS CONTRACT, ARRINGTON CAN AFFORD TOP-OF-THE-LINE EVERYTHING. IF YOU CAN TOO, A SETUP LIKE HIS WILL SET YOU BACK MORE THAN \$300K. OTHERWISE, TRY THESE SHORTCUTS:

- **HOME OFFICE COMPUTERS** At \$1,799, the Compaq X is an affordable alternative to Alienware; Dell offers a 24" LCD for \$1,199. If you already have a compatible monitor and keyboard, try the \$499 Mac Mini processor.
- **LAPTOPS** The Toshiba Qosmio F15-AV notebook (\$1,999) has a glossy screen and lets you enjoy movies and music without booting up the whole machine.
- **PHONES** Sure, the Razr is sexy, and every red-carpet celeb has a Sidekick, but the Nokia 6820 combines the functionality of both for just \$299.
- **HOME THEATER** No space or budget for a full theater system? Focus on the screen. Plasma prices fell more than 20% last year, and HD programs are booming; try the 42" Dell Plasma (\$2,999).
- **KIDS' STUFF** You can't beat the performance or fun of a real Helmet PC. A basic unit with your favorite team's helmet is \$789 and makes a great gift.
- **UNWIRED** One wireless router is fine for most homes. Apple's AirPort Extreme (\$199) is easiest to set up, but a Belkin G router costs just \$104. For large homes, consider adding a Hawking Technology Wireless-G Range Extender (\$99).
- **MUSIC** Nothing beats an iPod for on-the-road digital music storage. If the beefier 20gb, \$299 original is too steep, the thrifter iPod Shuffle holds 120 songs and costs just \$99.
- **PHOTOS** Panasonic's Lumix DMC-FX7K has a fancy 5-megapixel capacity for a very unfancy \$399 price. The Canon i900D printers we chose for Arrington, though, are already a steal: at \$199 each, they're more functional than many higher-end models.
- **SECURITY** Motorola's Easy Start kit comes with a wireless camera and base station at a reasonable \$280; extra sensors cost \$40 each.

A man is sitting on a dark, low-profile couch in a dimly lit room. He is wearing a thick, light-colored fur coat over a dark shirt and blue jeans. He is looking towards the right side of the frame with a slight smile. In front of him, on a dark surface, are several electronic devices, including a laptop and a monitor. The background wall is dark and features a large, intricate, glowing white spiderweb that dominates the upper half of the image. The lighting is dramatic, with the spiderweb being the primary light source, casting long, soft shadows.

CUTTING THE CORD

Arrington picks six wireless laptops to stash in different rooms of the house: a Sony Vaio VGN-X505 with carbon fiber case (\$3,000); a Panasonic Toughbook Y2 laptop (\$2,675); three 14" Apple iBooks (\$1,500 each); and his favorite, a Motion Computing MC1400 Tablet PC (\$1,999). The Macs are configured for guests to use, while the PCs are set up for Arrington and his family to control the security system from anywhere in the house. All the laptops connect to the home network through wireless base stations. Three AirPort Extreme wireless hubs (\$199 each) outfitted with Dr. Bott external antennas (\$99 each) blanket the house and part of the grounds with a high-speed wireless Internet signal. Icing on the wireless cake is the handful of Canon and Sony digital cameras (two Canon PowerShot S500s for \$599 each, three Canon PowerShot S010s for \$440 each, a Sony Cyber-shot DSC-T1 for about \$550) and five wireless Canon i9000 photo printers (\$199 each)—so family and friends can snap pics and print them anytime and anywhere.